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Should Yoga Be Practiced Differently By Men and Women?



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# Women?

Sadhguru looks at how traditionally, most yogic practices were created with the male body in mind, which is why women should be careful about what they practice and when they practice.

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**S**adhguru looks at how traditionally, most **yogic practices** were created with the male body in mind, which is why women should be careful about what they practice and when they practice. He looks at how certain practices being taught around the world today are not appropriate for women.

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## Full Transcript:

Sadhguru: If you... if you look at the classic yogic system, it is essentially created for the male body. They did not consider the female body because females never came for sadhana in those times. It was not possible for them to come, for various reasons – biological reasons, social reasons, the way everything else was and because yoga was not taught in a studio, it was taught by some guru somewhere in some cave, in some mountains, some forest, a woman could not go in those days. So largely, ninety percent of the yogic system was oriented towards the male body, not towards the female body. So many systems of yoga, which are being recklessly taught today could damage a woman's body if not properly handled. One of the things that you are learning is mayurasana. They told you not to do mayurasana? Yeah, because that's not suitable. It's a peacock asana, not a peahen asana. (Laughter) So like this there are many aspects, some of them are very physical aspects, some of them more

subtle, but they are there. If we have to look at all of them, they'll all fall asleep on me. I have to... a responsibility of keeping all of them awake, so (Laughs) we cannot go into all of that. But essentially there are certain things a woman should not do at all. There are certain things that she should not do at certain times.

So what she should not do at all? Generally in Isha Yoga we have not even looking at those things, except mayurasana and a few other things which are not... in coming in touch with you. For brahmacharies we have a few things which... which are not necessary for others. So during certain times what you should not do depends from one moment to another. It could be little different. Not everybody suffers those few days as much as somebody else. For some people it throws whole... their whole life off the track. Some people go through it without much disturbance, either in their psychological or physiological system. So depending upon how a particular person is, mild adjustments will have to be made, but if we are doing anything which is very forceful, if we're doing any practice which is forceful in nature, it is best to avoid it at those times, because any forceful activity could cause agitation in the body and in the mind, because at that time naturally body is seeking a certain amount of rest, a certain amount of quiet... not agitated activity. But today because the whole world is male, including women... Yes, the whole world is masculine, including women because there is no other way to survive and exist in the world. It's all been structured for masculinity to find expression and women have to fit into it. Sunday holiday, do you understand, whether you like it or not.

A woman would have liked to have holiday on those days when she doesn't want to be too active; that would be a natural urge. But that's not the thing, we give you Sunday holiday whether you like it or not, okay? So those subtle adjustments are not possible in life. So it's better to try to do certain type of yoga to prepare you to be more masculine, to handle life the way it is structured right now, because without that you may be considered incompetent. I wouldn't personally consider it as incompetent but the world may label you as incompetent if you cannot do certain things in the world, which may

not at all be feminine. So a certain amount of building a little macho stuff into you is needed to make you successful in the world, because that is also an important part of life.

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There are certain other aspects which are more towards kriya than asana. If you have learned to do asana in a very relaxed way, it's all right to do everything. If you are still not there, it's better to avoid a few things. But if you do asanas properly, the struggles that you are having with your monthly cycles should completely go away; at least the pain and the cramps and the works should just completely disappear if your sadhana is right. If it has increased after sadhana, you must wait for three months. After three months if it's still not reduced then we must relook at your sadhana, how you're doing it. What you're doing may be okay but how you are doing needs to be looked at. With kriyas there are more restrictions. With asana there is not much restriction. There may be some practices which are physical postures and also kriyas – they are the things that you need to be really careful about. Like we are doing surya kriya. Surya kriya needs to be looked at carefully because if too much sun burns within you then... it's very good on one level but if it's troubling you in your feminine aspect, then we need to re-adjust it, we need to re-jig it a little bit for you; it's very important that it's individual, there is no common prescription like that.

'If the question is how do we do this when we teach yoga?' So for that we will give you clear guidance. If you notice this, this and this, just say no to this, this and this. A few things we will say no at certain times of the cycle, that's all. That should take care of it. But largely most of the stuff that you are learning fits into life all times. Inverted postures, certain strenuous breathing, these things will have to be avoided; we will instruct you as to what are those things. But generally what's being taught as Isha Yoga need not be avoided, it's all fine, except the kapalabhati, everything else is fine, can be done. Unless you're particularly sensitive, then maybe a few things have to be avoided but almost everything that you do can be done,

except kapalabhati.

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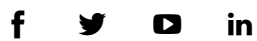
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